



General Assembly

January Session, 2001

***Raised Bill No. 6876***

LCO No. 3783

Referred to Committee on Education

Introduced by:  
(ED )

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY  
READING SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAMS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General  
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-16o of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 The state shall encourage the development of a network of school  
4 readiness programs pursuant to sections 10-16p to 10-16r, inclusive, 10-  
5 16u and 17b-749a in order to:

6 (1) Provide open access for children to quality programs that  
7 promote the health and safety of children and prepare them for formal  
8 schooling;

9 (2) Provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable  
10 and accredited or approved programs;

11 (3) Encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and  
12 prevent the duplication of services;

13 (4) Recognize the specific service needs and unique resources

14 available to particular municipalities and provide flexibility in the  
15 implementation of programs;

16 (5) Prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delay in  
17 children prior to children reaching the age of five;

18 (6) Enhance federally funded school readiness programs;

19 (7) Strengthen the family through: (A) Encouragement of parental  
20 involvement in a child's development and education; and (B)  
21 enhancement of a family's capacity to meet the special needs of the  
22 children, including children with disabilities;

23 (8) Reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special  
24 education services for school age children and to avoid grade  
25 repetition;

26 (9) Assure that children with disabilities are integrated into  
27 programs available to children who are not disabled; and

28 (10) Improve the availability and quality of school readiness  
29 programs, and their coordination with the services of child care  
30 providers.

31 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is  
32 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

33 (b) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for school  
34 readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school  
35 readiness program providers eligible for funding from the Department  
36 of Education shall include local and regional boards of education,  
37 regional educational service centers, family resource centers and  
38 providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77, Head  
39 Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that meet  
40 such standards established by the Commissioner of Education. The  
41 department shall establish standards for school readiness programs.  
42 The standards may include, but need not be limited to, guidelines for

43 staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including pre-literacy  
44 development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff qualifications  
45 and training, and administration. The department shall develop age-  
46 appropriate developmental skills and goals for children attending such  
47 programs. The commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioners  
48 of Higher Education and Social Services and other appropriate entities,  
49 shall develop a continuing education training program for the staff of  
50 school readiness programs. For purposes of this section, on and after  
51 July 1, 2003, "staff qualifications" means there is in each classroom an  
52 individual who has at least the following: (1) A credential issued by an  
53 organization approved by the Commissioner of Education and nine  
54 credits or more in early childhood education or child development  
55 from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of  
56 Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited; (2) an  
57 associate's degree in early childhood education or child development  
58 from such an institution; or (3) a four-year degree in early childhood  
59 education or child development from such an institution.

60 Sec. 3. Subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is  
61 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

62 (e) (1) Ninety-three per cent of the amount appropriated for  
63 purposes of this section shall be used for the grant program pursuant  
64 to subsection (c) of this section. Priority school districts and former  
65 priority school districts shall receive grants based on their proportional  
66 share of the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the average  
67 number of enrolled kindergarten students in each priority school  
68 district and in each former priority school district for the three years  
69 prior to the year the grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average  
70 percentage of free and reduced price meals for all severe need schools  
71 in such district to the minimum percentage requirement for severe  
72 need school eligibility, provided no such school district shall receive a  
73 grant that is less than the grant it received for the prior fiscal year.

74 (2) Six and five-tenths per cent of the amount appropriated for

75 purposes of this section shall be used for the competitive grant  
76 program pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

77 (3) If an amount in excess of forty million dollars is appropriated for  
78 purposes of this section, five per cent of the excess amount shall be  
79 used to provide funds to school readiness councils for the coordination  
80 of services between programs for infants and toddlers and programs  
81 for three and four year olds.

82 [(3)] (4) The Department of Education may retain up to five-tenths  
83 of one per cent of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section  
84 for coordination, program evaluation and administration.

85 [(4)] (5) If a town that is eligible for a grant pursuant to subsection  
86 (c) of this section does not submit, by January first, a plan which is  
87 subsequently approved for the expenditure of the entire amount of  
88 funds for which such town is eligible, the department may use up to  
89 ten per cent of any amounts such town has not earmarked for  
90 expenditure to provide supplemental grants to other towns that are  
91 eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

92 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 10-16q of the general statutes is  
93 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

94 (a) Each school readiness program shall include: (1) A plan for  
95 collaboration with other community programs and services, including  
96 public libraries, and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate  
97 full-day and year-round child care and education programs for  
98 children of working parents and parents in education or training  
99 programs; (2) parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;  
100 (3) (A) record-keeping policies that require documentation of the  
101 name and address of each child's doctor, primary care provider and  
102 health insurance company and information on whether the child is  
103 immunized and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early  
104 and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program  
105 under 42 USC 1396d, and (B) referrals for health services, including

106 referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings; (4) a plan for  
 107 the incorporation of appropriate pre-literacy practices and teacher  
 108 training in such practices; (5) nutrition services; [(5)] (6) referrals to  
 109 family literacy programs that incorporate adult basic education and  
 110 provide for the promotion of literacy through access to public library  
 111 services; [(6)] (7) admission policies that promote enrollment of  
 112 children from different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds and  
 113 from other communities; [(7)] (8) a plan of transition for participating  
 114 children from the school readiness program to kindergarten and  
 115 provide for the transfer of records from the program to the  
 116 kindergarten program; [(8)] (9) a plan for professional development for  
 117 staff, [; (9)] including, but not limited to, training (A) in pre-literacy  
 118 skills development and (B) designed to (i) develop an appreciation of  
 119 the contributions to American civilization of various racial and ethnic  
 120 groups; (ii) counteract biases, discrimination and prejudices; and (iii)  
 121 assure respect for human diversity and personal rights; (10) a sliding  
 122 fee scale for families participating in the program pursuant to section  
 123 17b-749d; and [(10)] (11) an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of  
 124 the program. On and after July 1, 2000, school readiness programs  
 125 shall use the assessment measures developed pursuant to section 10-  
 126 16s in conducting their annual evaluations.

127 Sec. 5. Section 10-16u of the general statutes is repealed and the  
 128 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

129 For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002, and each fiscal year  
 130 thereafter, the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the  
 131 Commissioner of Social Services, shall provide grants, within available  
 132 appropriations, to eligible school readiness program providers  
 133 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-16p, as amended by this act, to  
 134 provide spaces in accredited or approved school readiness programs  
 135 for eligible children who reside in transitional school districts pursuant  
 136 to section 10-263c, except for transitional school districts eligible for  
 137 grants pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-16p. The amount of the  
 138 grant provided for a transitional school district pursuant to this section

139 shall not exceed two hundred thousand dollars. Under the program,  
140 the grant shall be provided to the town in which such transitional  
141 school district is located. Eligibility shall be determined for a five-year  
142 period based on a school district's designation as a transitional school  
143 district in the initial year of application, except that grants pursuant to  
144 this section shall not be provided for transitional school districts  
145 eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of said section 10-16p.  
146 Grant awards shall be made annually contingent upon available  
147 funding and a satisfactory annual evaluation. The chief elected official  
148 of such town and the superintendent of schools for such transitional  
149 school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds  
150 and responses to the local request for proposal process to the  
151 Departments of Education and Social Services. The departments shall  
152 jointly review such plans and shall each approve the portion of such  
153 plan within its jurisdiction for funding. The plan shall meet the  
154 requirements specified in subsection (c) of said section 10-16p.

155 Sec. 6. Subsection (c) of section 17b-749c of the general statutes is  
156 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

157 (c) The grants shall be used to:

158 (1) Help providers who are not accredited by the National  
159 Association for the Education of Young Children to obtain such  
160 accreditation;

161 (2) Help directors and administrators to obtain training;

162 ~~[(2)]~~ (3) Provide comprehensive services, such as enhanced access to  
163 health care, a child care consultant, nutrition, family support services,  
164 parent education, literacy and parental involvement, and community  
165 and home outreach programs; and provide information concerning  
166 access when needed to a speech or language therapist, licensed  
167 psychologist or psychiatrist, dentist, dietician or physical or  
168 occupational therapist;

169        [(3)] (4) Purchase educational equipment;

170        [(4)] (5) Provide scholarships for training to obtain a child  
171        development associate certificate;

172        [(5)] (6) Provide training for persons who are mentor teachers, as  
173        defined in federal regulations for the Head Start program, and provide  
174        a family service coordinator or a family service worker as such  
175        positions are defined in such federal regulations;

176        [(6)] (7) Repair fire, health and safety problems in existing facilities  
177        and conduct minor remodeling to comply with the Americans with  
178        Disabilities Act; train child care providers on injury and illness  
179        prevention; renovate playgrounds; improve transportation safety; and  
180        achieve compliance with national safety standards developed by  
181        public health and pediatric experts;

182        [(7)] (8) Create a supportive network with family day care homes;

183        [(8)] (9) Provide for educational consultation and staff development;

184        [(9)] (10) Provide for program quality assurance personnel;

185        [(10)] (11) Provide technical assistance services to enable providers  
186        to develop child care facilities pursuant to sections 17b-749g, 17b-749h  
187        and 17b-749i; and

188        [(11)] (12) Establish a single point of entry system.

189        Sec. 7. Section 17b-749e of the general statutes is repealed and the  
190        following is substituted in lieu thereof:

191        The Department of Social Services shall establish and fund five  
192        regional accreditation projects, within available appropriations. The  
193        department shall select qualified applicants for each region through a  
194        request for proposal process. The department shall give priority to  
195        child day care facilities where at least twenty per cent of the children  
196        live with families earning less than seventy-five per cent of the state

197 median income level. Such regional accreditation projects may make  
198 available, within available funding, to child care providers health  
199 consultants that offer training and technical assistance.

200 Sec. 8. Subsection (a) of section 17b-749k of the general statutes is  
201 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

202 (a) [On and after January 1, 1998, the] The Commissioner of Social  
203 Services shall, within available appropriations, [request a criminal  
204 records check] require state and national criminal history records  
205 checks for any person, other than a relative, providing child care  
206 services to a child in the child's home who receives a child care subsidy  
207 from the Department of Social Services. Such criminal history records  
208 [check] checks shall be requested from the State Police Bureau of  
209 Identification and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The  
210 Commissioner of Social Services shall arrange for the fingerprinting of  
211 such person or for the conducting of any other method of positive  
212 identification required by the State Police Bureau of Identification or  
213 the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The fingerprinting or other  
214 positive identifying information shall be forwarded to the State Police  
215 Bureau of Identification which shall conduct a state criminal history  
216 records check and submit the fingerprints or other positive identifying  
217 information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national  
218 criminal history records check. The commissioner shall also [request]  
219 require a check of the state child abuse registry established pursuant to  
220 section 17a-101k. A fee shall be charged by the commissioner for each  
221 such national criminal history records check which shall be equal to  
222 the fee charged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for performing  
223 such check. The Department of Social Services shall reimburse the  
224 Department of Public Safety for the actual cost for a national criminal  
225 history records check.

226 Sec. 9. Section 17b-750 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
227 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

228 No child care subsidy shall be paid to an unlicensed child care



229 provider if such provider has been convicted of any crime involving  
230 sexual assault of a minor or serious physical injury to a minor or any  
231 crime committed in any other state or jurisdiction the essential  
232 elements of which are substantially the same as such crimes. If the  
233 commissioner has reason to believe that a provider of child care  
234 services has been so convicted, [he] the commissioner may demand  
235 that such provider be subject to state and national criminal history  
236 checks. [The commissioner shall request the state criminal history  
237 records check for such provider] If the criminal history records checks  
238 are required pursuant to this section, the commissioner shall request  
239 such checks from the State Police Bureau of Identification. The  
240 commissioner shall arrange for the fingerprinting of such provider  
241 [and forward the fingerprints to said bureau which shall] or for the  
242 conducting of any other method of positive identification required by  
243 the State Police Bureau of Identification or the Federal Bureau of  
244 Investigation. The fingerprints or other positive identifying  
245 information shall be forwarded to the State Police Bureau of  
246 Identification which shall conduct a state criminal history records  
247 check and submit the fingerprints or other identifying information to  
248 the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national criminal history  
249 records check. The commissioner may charge such provider a fee for  
250 the national criminal history records check which shall not exceed the  
251 fee charged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for performing the  
252 check. The Department of Social Services shall reimburse the  
253 Department of Public Safety for the actual cost for a national criminal  
254 history records check.

255 Sec. 10. (a) Each local school readiness council shall invite  
256 representatives from the early care and education system for children,  
257 from birth to age eight, inclusive, to identify the existing strengths and  
258 gaps in service and the maximize early childhood healthy  
259 development and school readiness. The assessment shall include  
260 program, policy, coordination, training and funding opportunities  
261 focused on the health, safety and learning of young children. The  
262 Commission on Children shall provide state technical assistance to the

263 school readiness councils in the identification and reporting of  
264 strengths and gaps in the early care and education system for young  
265 children. Each school readiness council shall submit its report to the  
266 Commissioners of Education and Social Services by January 1, 2002.

267 (b) The Commissioners of Education and Social Services, in  
268 consultation with the Commissioners of Public Health, Children and  
269 Families, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Executive  
270 Director of the Office of the Child Advocate and the Commission on  
271 Children shall review such reports and make recommendations  
272 concerning a coordinated system of early care and education. The  
273 Commissioners of Education and Social Services shall report, in  
274 accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint  
275 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
276 matters relating to education and human services with their  
277 recommendations by July 1, 2002.

278 Sec. 11. Section 10-221l of the general statutes is repealed and the  
279 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

280 The Department of Education shall develop, within available  
281 appropriations, a State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute for  
282 educators based on the review completed by the Early Reading Success  
283 Panel pursuant to section 10-221j and the assessments conducted  
284 pursuant to section 10-221k. The institute shall commence operation in  
285 the 2000-2001 school year. The institute shall use training curriculum  
286 that incorporates comprehensive instruction in reading as determined  
287 by the Early Reading Success Panel pursuant to section 10-221j, to  
288 include, but not be limited to: (1) Instructional strategies that can be  
289 adapted for each student's needs, (2) early screening and ongoing  
290 assessment to determine which individual students need additional  
291 instruction; (3) teaching of oral language competencies including  
292 vocabulary, listening comprehension and grammatical skills; (4)  
293 systematic teaching of word identification skills including phonics  
294 instruction and instruction in phonemic awareness; and (5) teaching of

295 comprehension competencies, including the use of context to infer  
296 meaning and evaluation.

297       Sec. 12. Section 10-221m of the general statutes is repealed and the  
298 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

299       On or before July 1, 2001, each local or regional board of education  
300 for a priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p shall develop  
301 and implement a three-year in-service reading instruction training  
302 plan for the professional development of the district's school librarians,  
303 elementary school principals and not less than seventy per cent of its  
304 teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, provided spaces are  
305 available at the State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute for such  
306 training. The plan shall be consistent with the model for instruction  
307 developed by the State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute pursuant  
308 to section 10-221l, as amended by this act, and by January 1, 2002, shall  
309 delineate the specific knowledge and skills training necessary for  
310 teachers to deliver effective reading instruction. The local or regional  
311 board of education may use funds received by the school district  
312 pursuant to section 10-265f for teacher training based on the plan.

313       Sec. 13. The Department of Education shall take the actions outlined  
314 in this section relating to reading instruction and teacher training: (1)  
315 Oversee the development of the curricula for the Early Reading  
316 Success Institute pursuant to section 10-221l of the general statutes, as  
317 amended by this act, and establish necessary qualifications for persons  
318 providing teacher training; (2) develop recommendations to modify to  
319 state mandated student outcome assessments in kindergarten to grade  
320 three, inclusive, to align with the results of the Early Reading Success  
321 Panel's research pursuant to section 10-221j of the general statutes; (3)  
322 delineate the number and content of reading courses leading to  
323 certification in elementary education as a reading specialist; and (4)  
324 examine the curriculum module designs and implementation of  
325 teacher training based on the report of the Early Reading Success  
326 Panel. The Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with

327 section 11-4a of the general statutes, on such actions to the joint  
328 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
329 matters relating to education by January 1, 2002.

330 Sec. 14. (NEW) The Department of Education shall contract for an  
331 independent evaluation of the early reading success teacher training  
332 and curriculum modules as delineated in sections 10-221j to 10-221m,  
333 inclusive, as amended by this act. Performance measures shall include  
334 the specific reading skills pursuant to section 10-221l, as amended by  
335 this act, that are necessary for teachers to teach reading effectively and  
336 children to learn to read successfully.

337 Sec. 15. Section 10-265f of the general statutes is repealed and the  
338 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

339 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall establish, within available  
340 appropriations, an early reading success grant program to assist local  
341 and regional boards of education for priority school districts and  
342 school districts in which priority elementary schools are located in: (1)  
343 Establishing full-day kindergarten programs; (2) reducing class size in  
344 grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, to not more than eighteen  
345 students; and (3) establishing intensive early intervention reading  
346 programs, including after-school and summer programs, for students  
347 identified as being at risk of failing to learn to read by the end of first  
348 grade and students in grades one to three, inclusive, who are reading  
349 below grade level. Eligibility for grants pursuant to this section shall be  
350 determined for a five-year period based on a school district's  
351 designation as a priority school district or as a school district in which  
352 a priority elementary school is located for the initial year of  
353 application. In order to receive a grant, an eligible board of education  
354 shall submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds, in accordance  
355 with this section, to the Department of Education, at such time and in  
356 such manner as the commissioner prescribes. An eligible school district  
357 may receive a grant for one or more purposes pursuant to subdivisions  
358 (1) to (3), inclusive, of this subsection, provided at least fifty per cent of

359 any grant funds received by such school district are used for programs  
360 pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection. If the commissioner  
361 determines the school district is addressing the issue of early reading  
362 intervention sufficiently, the commissioner may allow the school  
363 district to set aside a smaller percentage of the funds received pursuant  
364 to this section for such programs.

365 (b) (1) In the case of proposals for full-day kindergarten programs,  
366 the plan shall include: (A) Information on the number of full-day  
367 kindergarten classes that will be offered initially and the number of  
368 children to be enrolled in such classes; (B) how the board anticipates  
369 expanding the number of full-day kindergarten programs in future  
370 school years; (C) the number of additional teachers needed and any  
371 additional equipment needed for purposes of such programs; (D) a  
372 description of any proposed school building project that is related to  
373 the need for additional space for full-day kindergarten programs,  
374 including an analysis of the different options available to meet such  
375 need, such as relocatable classrooms, the division of existing  
376 classrooms, an addition to a building or new construction; (E)  
377 information on the curriculum for the full-day kindergarten program  
378 pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection; (F) information on  
379 coordination between the full-day kindergarten program and school  
380 readiness programs for the purpose of providing (i) transition to  
381 school information from preschool to kindergarten, including  
382 information on the child's preschool records and (ii) before and after  
383 school child care for children attending the full-day kindergarten  
384 program; and (G) any additional information the commissioner deems  
385 relevant.

386 (2) A full-day kindergarten program that receives funding pursuant  
387 to this subsection shall: (A) Include language development and  
388 appropriate reading readiness experiences; (B) provide for the  
389 assessment of a student's progress; (C) include a professional  
390 development component in the teaching of reading and reading  
391 readiness and assessment of reading competency for kindergarten

392 teachers; [and] (D) provide for parental involvement; and (E) refer  
393 eligible children who do not have health insurance to the HUSKY  
394 program.

395 (c) (1) In the case of proposals for the reduction of class size in  
396 grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, to not more than eighteen  
397 students the plan shall include: (A) A time frame for achieving such  
398 reduction in class size; (B) information on the class size in such grades  
399 at each school at the time of application for the grant and the number  
400 of classes to be reduced in size with grant funds; (C) the number of  
401 additional teachers needed and any additional equipment needed; (D)  
402 a description of any proposed school building project related to the  
403 need for additional space for smaller classes, including an analysis of  
404 the different options available to meet such need such as relocatable  
405 classrooms, the division of existing classrooms, an addition to a  
406 building or new construction; (E) an estimate of the costs associated  
407 with implementation of the plan; and (F) any additional information  
408 the commissioner deems relevant.

409 (2) If a school district accepts funds pursuant to this subsection,  
410 such school district shall limit the class size of classes in which core  
411 curriculum is taught in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, in  
412 accordance with its plan to eighteen or less students, provided  
413 students who enroll after October first in any school year are not  
414 included for purposes of such count.

415 (d) In the case of proposals for intensive early intervention reading  
416 programs including after-school and summer programs, the plan shall:  
417 (1) [Provide] Incorporate the competencies required for early reading  
418 success, critical indicators for teacher intervention and the components  
419 of a high quality early reading success curriculum in accordance with  
420 the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel delineated in section  
421 10-2211, as amended by this act, (2) provide for a period of time each  
422 day of individualized or small group instruction for each student; [(2)]  
423 (3) provide for monitoring of students and follow-up in subsequent

424 grades, documentation of continuous classroom observation of  
 425 student's reading behaviors and establishment of performance  
 426 indicators aligned with the state-wide mastery examinations under  
 427 chapter 163c, the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel pursuant  
 428 to section 10-221j and other methodologies for assessing reading  
 429 competencies established by the department pursuant to section 10-  
 430 221i; [(3)] (4) include a professional development component for  
 431 teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, that emphasizes the  
 432 teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading  
 433 competency based on the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel  
 434 pursuant to section 10-221j; [(4)] (5) provide for parental involvement  
 435 and ensure that parents have access to information on strategies that  
 436 may be used at home to improve prereading or reading skills; [(5)] (6)  
 437 provide for data collection and program evaluation; and [(6)] (7) any  
 438 additional information the commissioner deems relevant.

439 (e) (1) The pilot programs established pursuant to section 10-265j  
 440 shall be funded from the amount appropriated for purposes of this  
 441 section. The department shall use ninety per cent of the remaining  
 442 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for grants to priority  
 443 school districts. Priority school districts shall receive grants based on  
 444 their proportional share of the sum of the products obtained by  
 445 multiplying the number of enrolled kindergarten students in each  
 446 priority school district for the year prior to the year the grant is to be  
 447 paid, by the ratio of the average percentage of free and reduced price  
 448 meals for all severe need schools in such district to the minimum  
 449 percentage requirement for severe need school eligibility. (2) The  
 450 department shall use nine per cent of such remaining funds for  
 451 competitive grants to school districts in which a priority elementary  
 452 school is located. In awarding grants to school districts in which  
 453 priority elementary schools are located, the department shall consider  
 454 the town wealth, as defined in subdivision (26) of section 10-262f, of  
 455 the town in which the school district is located, or in the case of  
 456 regional school districts, the towns which comprise the regional school  
 457 district. Grants received by school districts in which priority

458 elementary schools are located shall not exceed one hundred thousand  
459 dollars and shall be used for the appropriate purpose at the priority  
460 elementary school. (3) The department may retain up to one per cent of  
461 such remaining funds for coordination, program evaluation and  
462 administration.

463 (f) No funds received pursuant to this section shall be used to  
464 supplant federal, state or local funding to the local or regional boards  
465 of education for programs for grades kindergarten to three, inclusive.

466 (g) Expenditure reports shall be filed with the department as  
467 requested by the commissioner. School districts shall refund (1) any  
468 unexpended amounts at the close of the program for which the grant is  
469 awarded, and (2) any amounts not expended in accordance with the  
470 approved grant application.

471 Sec. 16. Subsection (b) of section 10-265g of the general statutes is  
472 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

473 (b) For each school year commencing on or after July 1, 1999, each  
474 local and regional board of education for a priority school district shall  
475 require the schools under its jurisdiction to evaluate the reading level  
476 of students enrolled in grades one to three, inclusive, in the middle of  
477 the school year and at the end of the school year. A student shall be  
478 determined to be substantially deficient in reading based on measures  
479 established by the State Board of Education. Each school shall provide  
480 a reading program for such students that incorporates the  
481 competencies required for early reading success and effective reading  
482 instruction as delineated in section 10-221l, as amended by this act. If a  
483 student is determined to be substantially deficient in reading based on:  
484 (1) The middle of the year evaluation, the school shall notify the  
485 parents or guardian of the student of such result; and (2) the end of the  
486 year evaluation, the school shall develop a personal reading plan for  
487 such student. The personal reading plan shall include measures to  
488 improve the student's reading level, such as tutoring, a transitional  
489 class, or a summer reading program as described in subsection (d) of



490 section 10-265f. Promotion of such student from grade to grade shall be  
491 based on documented progress in achieving the goals of the personal  
492 reading plan or demonstrated reading proficiency. If a decision is  
493 made to promote a student who is substantially deficient in reading  
494 from third to fourth grade, the school principal shall provide written  
495 justification for such promotion to the superintendent of schools.  
496 Students who are substantially deficient in reading and are promoted  
497 from third to fourth grade shall be assessed in the fourth grade and  
498 shall be provided a reading program that incorporates the  
499 competencies required for early reading success and effective reading  
500 instruction as delineated in section 10-221l, as amended by this act. A  
501 personal reading plan shall be maintained for a student who is  
502 substantially deficient in reading until the student achieves a  
503 satisfactory level of proficiency.

504 Sec. 17. Section 10-265k of the general statutes is repealed and the  
505 following is substituted in lieu thereof:

506 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall conduct, within available  
507 appropriations, a longitudinal study that examines the educational  
508 progress of children both during and following participation in early  
509 reading success grant programs pursuant to section 10-265f, as  
510 amended by this act.

511 (b) The Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with  
512 section 11-4a, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
513 having cognizance of matters relating to education on the longitudinal  
514 study by January 1, [2001] 2002.

515 Sec. 18. Subsection (h) of section 10-285a of the general statutes is  
516 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

517 (h) Subject to the provisions of section 10-285d, if an elementary  
518 school building project for a school in a priority school district or for a  
519 priority school is necessary in order to offer a full-day kindergarten  
520 program or to reduce class size pursuant to section 10-265f, as

521 amended by this act, the percentage determined pursuant to this  
522 section shall be increased by [five] ten percentage points for the  
523 portion of the building used primarily for such full-day kindergarten  
524 program or such reduced size classes.

525       Sec. 19. The Commissioner of Higher Education shall study teacher  
526 education programs within the institutions of higher education that  
527 provide coursework in reading instruction. The commissioner shall  
528 evaluate how such programs are addressing the diagnosis of reading  
529 difficulties and whether they are teaching effective instructional and  
530 assessment methods for reading competency. The commissioner shall  
531 determine whether such programs include methods of teaching (1) oral  
532 language competencies, including vocabulary, listening comprehension  
533 and grammatical skills, (2) word identification skills, including phonics  
534 instruction and instruction in phonemic awareness, and (3)  
535 comprehension competencies, including the use of context to infer  
536 meaning and evaluation. On or before July 1, 2002, the commissioner  
537 shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
538 general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the general assembly  
539 having cognizance of matters relating to education on the results of such  
540 study, including any recommendations for revisions to such programs.

541       Sec. 20. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

***Statement of Purpose:***

To make numerous changes to the school readiness and early reading success programs including (1) the establishment of standards for pre-literacy development and a requirement for school readiness plans to include pre-literacy practices and teacher training in the development of pre-literacy skills, (2) the setting of a cap for the amount of school readiness grants to transitional school districts at two hundred thousand dollars, (3) providing for coordination between child care providers and school readiness programs, (4) expanding the uses of supplemental school readiness quality enhancement grants, (5) revising the requirement for criminal history records checks for child care providers, (6) providing for health consultants for school readiness programs, (7) specifying the components of comprehensive reading instruction programs, (8) expanding the requirements for the

early reading success grant program, (9) providing for an independent evaluation of the early reading success teacher training and curriculum modules, (10) ensuring that students in priority school districts who are substantially deficient in reading are provided reading programs that incorporate the findings of the Early Reading Success Panel, (11) ensuring that such children who are promoted from third to fourth grade are followed the next school year and are provided reading programs that incorporate such findings, (12) increasing the incentive for school building projects related to the provision of full-day kindergarten or a reduction in class size, and (13) providing for a study of teacher education programs in reading instruction.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*